

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 PRAGUE 00474 01 OF 03 241718Z

43

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AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 PRAGUE 0474

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CZ

SUBJECT: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS IN EASTERN EUROPE

1. THE FOLLOWING SPECULATION ABOUT PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS FOR US POLICY IN EASTERN EUROPE STEMS FROM FORTUITOUS ATTENDANCE AT TWO RECENT STIMULATING MEETINGS, THE LONDON CHIEFS OF MISSION CONFERENCE AND THE USNATO DCM-POLITICAL COUNSELOR CONFERENCE. DISCUSSION AT BOTH REMINDED THOSE SERVING IN EASTERN EUROPE THAT THEY MUST WORRY ABOUT THE USSR SWALLOWING UP NOT ONLY THEIR COUNTRY OF ASSIGNMENT BUT ALSO US POLICY TOWARDS IT. THE QUESTION OF STABILITY OR INSTABILITY IN THE AREA  
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PAGE 02 PRAGUE 00474 01 OF 03 241718Z

ASSUMED SPECIAL RELEVANCE AS DISCUSSION CONCEN-

TRATED ON AMERICAN ATTITUDES TOWARDS US-USSR  
DETENTE. AS EUR BEGINS ITS NEW STRETCHED-OUT  
ANNUAL ASSESSMENT PROCESS, CONSIDERATION WILL  
PRESUMABLY BE GIVEN NOT ONLY TO INDIVIDUAL EE  
COUNTRIES BUT ALSO TO US POLICY TOWARDS EASTERN  
EUROPE AS AN AREA. THE THOUGHTS THAT FOLLOW ARE  
PUT FORWARD AS A CONTRIBUTION TO THAT PROCESS, IN  
THE HOPE THAT US POLICY TOWARDS NON-SOVIET  
EASTERN EUROPE WILL RECEIVE THE ATTENTION IT  
DESERVES. (IT SHOULD BE ADDED THAT THESE VIEWS ARE  
PUT FORWARD WITH DIFFIDENCE, FOR ANY ONE-COUNTRY  
VIEWPOINT IS BOUND TO HAVE MANY SHORTCOMINGS.  
PERHAPS OTHERS WILL CORRECT THEM.)

2. THE FUNDAMENTAL QUESTION FOR US AND USSR IN  
EASTERN EUROPE IS STABILITY, AND ON THIS THERE  
MAY BE A TEMPTATION TO ERR IN OUR ASSESSMENTS ON  
THE SIDE OF CONTINUITY. OUR PREOCCUPATION WITH  
OUR OWN PROBLEMS IN THE WEST MAY MAKE EASTERN  
EUROPE LOOK SOLIDER IN OUR EYES THAN IN EE EYES,  
OR MOSCOW'S EVEN IF THE PREEMINENT DETERMINER  
OF EVENTS IN EE--SOVIET POLICY--IS MARKED BY  
CONTINUITY AT THE CPSU CONGRESS, US OBSERVERS,  
WITHOUT BEING ALARMIST, ARE BOUND TO STAY AWARE  
OF CERTAIN AREAS (AMONG OTHERS) OF POSSIBLE  
DISCONTINUITY:

(A) IF TITO SHOULD PROVE TO BE MORTAL, NO  
MATTER HOW MUCH CONFIDENCE ONE HAS IN THE YUGOSLAVS,  
IT SEEMS CERTAIN THAT THE POSSIBILITIES FOR SOVIET  
PRESSURES ON YUGOSLAVIA WILL INCREASE.

(B) WHILE WE COUNT ON CEAUSESCU'S  
CLEVERNESS, HE AND ROMANIA REMAIN IRRITANTS TO  
MOSCOW, AND SUSCEPTIBLE TO SOVIET PRESSURE.

(C) POLAND'S RELATIVE OPENNESS BRINGS WITH  
IT SOME GREATER POSSIBILITY OF MANIFESTATIONS OF  
INSTABILITY.

(D) CZECHS AND SLOVAKS, SULLEN AND APATHETIC  
AFTER 1968, COULD BECOME AROUSED AGAIN IF TROUBLE  
AROSE ELSEWHERE IN EE. IN FACT THE LARGEST  
DANGER IN EE--AS ULBRICHT AND COMULKA PERCEIVED  
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PAGE 03 PRAGUE 00474 01 OF 03 241718Z

IN 1968--IS FROM UNPREDICTABLE EFFECTS IN OTHER  
COUNTRIES IF TENSION ARISES IN ONE.

(E) FOR ALL THE GREAT DIFFERENCES, THERE  
IS A COMMON DENOMINATOR OF ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AND  
SHORTCOMINGS ALL ACROSS EE. POLITICAL PROBLEM  
AREAS CONTRIBUTE TO THIS MALAISE. THE PEOPLE DO  
NOT HAVE TO BE TOLD HOW FAR THEY REMAIN BEHIND  
THE WEST, EVEN WITH THE WEST'S ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES.

(F) MEANWHILE THE RUSSIANS (WHO LIKE THE FRENCH RIGHT HAVE NEVER LEARNED ANYTHING AND NEVER FORGOTTEN ANYTHIN, AT LEAST IN IDEOLOGICAL MATTERS) ARE STEPPING UP THE PRESSURE FOR SOLID-ARITY AND CONFORMITY ACROSS THE BOARD. SETBACKS IN GETTING A EUROPEAN COMMUNIST PARTY CONFERENCE OR A CEMA SUMMIT OR INTEGRATION OF IDEOLOGICAL POLICY DO NOT MEAN THE SOVIETS ARE GIVING UP: THE CPSU STILL CONSIDERS ITSELF THE "LEADING PARTY," AND MOSCOW STILL UPHOLDS THE BREZHNEV DOCTRINE. WHILE EE RESISTANCE AND WESTERN COMMUNIST PARTY INDEPENDENCE INCREASE (IN MANY CASES), THE USSR'S POWER KEEPS GROWING, AND IT ABHORS PLURALISM.

AS WE PONDER US POLICY TOWARDS NON-SOVIET EASTERN EUROPE, THEREFORE, WHILE WE LARGELY EXPECT CONTINUITY--AND EVEN STABILITY--WE SHOULD BE AWARE OF THE TENSIONS THAT SEEM LIKELY TO GROW OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS.

3. IF WE REVIEW US PERFORMANCE TOWARDS EASTERN EUROPE SINCE WWII, WE SEE THAT US POLICY HAS BEEN GENERALLY STEADY--THE RUSSIANS HAD PREPONDERANT POWER IN THE AREA AND WE HAD TO DEAL WITH THAT POWER--BUT AMERICAN PUBLIC DEBATE ABOUT OUR POLICY HAS SWUNG VEHEMENTLY UP AND DOWN. ONE SCHOOL HAS SUPPORTED CAPTIVE NATIONS WEEK AND RFE AND SLOGANS LIKE "ROLL BACK THE SOVIETS." THE OTHER SCHOOL HAS SAID "THE ROAD TO WARSAW (OR PRAGUE OR WHEREEVER) LIES THROUGH MOSCOW," AND SUPPORTED US-USSR DETENTE AS THE WAY TO HELP STIMULATE CHANGE IN THE USSR AND IN EASTERN EUROPE. EACH SCHOOL HAD PART OF THE TRUTH. THE FIRST WAS RIGHT IN STRESSING THAT THE EE PEOPLES DO

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PAGE 04 PRAGUE 00474 01 OF 03 241718Z

NOT WANT TO ACCEPT SOVIET DICTATION; BUT ITS ADHERENTS OFTEN ERRED IN ASSUMING THAT THE US OR THE WEST COULD DO THE JOB FOR EE OF COMBATTING

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PAGE 01 PRAGUE 00474 02 OF 03 241853Z

43

ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 INR-05 CIAE-00

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AMEMBASSY WARSAW

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 3 PRAGUE 0474

LIMDIS

SOVIET CONTROL. WE HAV LEARNED FROM EXPERIENCE THAT ALL WE CAN DO IS HELP THE EE PEOPLES HELP THEMSELVES--AND TO DO THAT CAUTIOUSLY AND OFTEN INDIRECTLY. THE SECOND SCHOOL IS RIGHT IN STRESS-ING THAT WE CANNOT CONFRONT THE USSR WITH A DIRECT CHANNELGE IN WHAT THE SOVIETS SEE AS SN AREA OF VITAL INTEREST IN SECURITY AND IN IDEOLOGICAL TERMS. HOWEVER, ITS ADHERENTS OFTEN ERRED BY LOOKING AT EE EXCESSIVELY THROUGH MOSCOW'S EYES, AND NOT BEING READY TO GIVE ENOUGH INDIRECT AID AND SUPPORT TO ENABLE THE EE VCOUNTRIES TO FOSTER THEIR OWN INDEPENDENCE.

4. FOR US POLICY, THE FOREGOING BOILS DOWN TO  
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PAGE 02 PRAGUE 00474 02 OF 03 241853Z

A FAMILIAR DILEMMA: WE WANT TO HELP THE EE COUNTRIES BE MORE INDEPENDENT, BUT WE DO NOT WANT TO PROVOKE OR WITNESS ANY CONFRONTATIONS IN EASTERN EUROPE. WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE GIEREKS, OR MORE LIBERAL CEAUSESCUS, IN ALL EE COUNTRIES CAPABLE OF PRODUCING THEM; WE DREAD THE APPEARANCE

OF NEW NAGYS OR DUBCEKS. THE QUESTION IS WHETHER  
OUR NATIONAL INTEREST AS A SUPER-POWER CAN BE  
RECONCILED WITH OUR MORAL INTEREST IN SEEING THE

EE PEOPLES OBTAIN THE BEST DOMESTIC CONDITIONS  
AND THE MOST INTERNATIONAL INDEPENDENCE AVAILABLE  
TO THEM. IN THE TERMS OF THE FINE DISCUSSION OF  
THESE MATTERS BY THE COUNSELOR OF THE DEPARTMENT  
AT THE LONDON CHIEFS OF MISSION CONFERENCE (STATE  
024976 EXDIS), CAN MOSCOW BE PERSUADED TO ALLOW  
ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE EE COUNTRIES TO BECOME  
ORGANIC--THE "FINLANDIZATION OF EASTERN EUROPE"--  
RATHER THAN TO REMAIN PURELY A DOMINATION BASED  
ON NAKED POWER? THIS CRUCIAL QUESTION IS POSED  
AT A TIME WHEN THE NEW POST-CONGRESS FIVE-YEAR-  
PLAN PERIOD WILL DEMAND NEW APPROACHES (OR AT  
LEAST NEW PACKAGES FOR OLD POLICIES) BY THE EE  
LEADERS, AND WHEN THE AMERICAN DOMESTIC POLITICAL  
CLIMATE MAY CALL FOR FRESH US THINKING IN SOME  
EAST-WEST AREAS. WHAT KIND OF US POLICY TOWARDS  
EASTERN EUROPE IS BOTH POSSIBLE AND PRUDENT IN  
THESE CIRCUMSTANCES? MAKERS OF US POLICY TOWARDS  
EASTERN EUROPE IN THE YEARS JUST AHEAD--BOTH  
IN THE EXECUTIVE AND IN THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCHES--  
WILL NEED TO REMAIN AWARE OF THE DANGER OF INSTA-  
BILITY IN THE AREA. PARTICULARLY IF US-USSR  
DETENTE STAYS UNDER ATTACK, THERE MAY BE A FRESH  
TEMPTATION TO TRY TO "USE" EE ISSUES AGAINST THE  
USSR. A GOOD DEAL OF EDUCATIONAL WORK WILL BE  
NEEDED, ESPECIALLY IN THE CONGRESS TO INSURE THT  
POLICY-MAKERS ARE AWARE OF THE LIMITS AND DANGERS  
OF THIS APPROACH. AT THE SAME TIME, PRESSURES  
FOR STEPPING UP US PRESSURE ON THE REGIMES OF  
EASTERN EUROPE, IN ORDER TO HELP THE PEOPLES  
OF THE AREA, MUST BE DEALT WITH CAREFULLY, LEST  
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PAGE 03 PRAGUE 00474 02 OF 03 241853Z

THEY PLAY INTO SOVIET HANDS. ONE POINT OF DEPAR-  
TURE IS TO TAKE THE ULTIMATE DESIRE FOR GREATER INDE-  
PENDENCE FROM MOSCOW AS A GIVEN IN MOST OF EASTERN  
EUROPE--THE NATURAL REACTION OF SMALL BUT PROUD  
COUNTRIES DEPENDENT FOR THEIR SECURITY ON THE  
GIANT USSR, WHOSE EMBRACE SMOTHERS THEM. IN THE  
PERIOD AHEAD, THE US NEED NOT EXPEND ENERGY FOSTER-  
ING A GREATER DESIRE FOR INDEPENDENCE AMONG THE  
EE COUNTRIES, OR NECESSARILY REWARDING MANIFES-  
TATIONS OF IT BY FAVORED TREATMENT. IF WE BELIEVE THE  
DESIRE FOR INDEPENDENCE WILL CONTINUE TO GROW  
OF ITSELF, AS IT OFTEN HAS IN THE PAST, THEN WE  
CAN SIMPLY DEAL WITH EACH COUNTRY AS ITS LEVEL

OF INDEPENDENCE JUSTIFIES, SO THAT A LARGER EXERCISE OF SOVEREIGN ATTRIBUTES WILL MEAN GREATER INTERCOURSE WITH THE US--BUT WITHOUT OUR SETTING UP CRITERIA SO THAT DISTANCING FROM MOSCOW IS THE ONLY TOUCHSTONE OF INDEPENDENCE. OUR EFFORT SHOULD BE TO BUILD MORE NORMAL RELATIONS WITH ALL THE EE COUNTRIES, IN THE SENSE OF MORE ECONOMIC COOPERATION, NORMAL TRADING RELATIONSHIPS, CUSTOMARY POLITICAL RELATIONS (INCLUDING MORE OF THE KIND OF HIGH-LEVEL VISITS EE LEADERS DOTE ON), AN EXPANDED CULTURAL PRESENCE, SOME GESTURES OF APPRECIATION OR ESTEEM BY US LEADERS AT PROPER MOMENTS--THE KIND OF PACKAGE WE ALREADY HAVE WITH SOME COUNTRIES, DESIGNED TO RECOGNIZE DISCREET SELF-HELP TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE. THIS KIND OF STEADY APPROACH, DIVORCED FROM ANY IMMEDIATE ADVANTAGE FOR THE US, WOULD HELP CERTAIN EE LEADERS STAND ON THEIR OWN FEET. IT WOULD DIFFER FROM PAST POLICY MAINLY IN PACE AND TONE--THAT IS, WE WOULD NOT BE SO INTENT UPON "REWARDING" EE GESTURES OF INDEPENDENCE FROM MOSCOW, AND WOULD BE WILLING TO FOREGO ANY IMMEDIATE BILATERAL PAYOFF FOR US INTERESTS.

6. IF THE ABOVE APPROACH MAKES ANY SENSE, IT WOULD BE BECAUSE WE HAVE TO COPE WITH A TRICKIER PERIOD BOTH IN US-USSR RELATIONS AND IN EASTERN EUROPE ITSELF, AS WELL AS IN THE CLIMATE OF US  
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PAGE 04 PRAGUE 00474 02 OF 03 241853Z

PUBLIC OPINION. BY THIS APPROACH IT SHOULD BE CLEAR TO MOSCOW THAT WE ARE NOT SEEKING TO UNDERMINE SOVIET SECURITY IN THE AREA. AT THE SAME TIME, BY ESTABLISHING MORE NORMAL RELATIONS WITH ALL THE EE STATES, WE WOULD BE DOING OUR UTMOST TO CONTRIBUTE TO STABILITY IN THE AREA. WESTERN ECONOMIC COOPERATION, PARTICULARLY, IS NEEDED TO KEEP THE DOMESTIC SITUATIONS IN EQUILIBRIUM. ABOVE ALL, AS THE EE COUNTRIES SEEK TO RESIST SOVIET PRESSURES FOR UNIFORMITY IN ALL FIELDS, THE SOVIETS WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO SUE THE ARGUMENT OF RESISTANCE TO WESTERN PROVOCATIONS. BY ALLOWING THE EE COUNTRIES TO SET THEIR OWN PACE--BUT HELPING THEM ALL WE CAN WITHIN THAT PACE--WE WOULD BEST ASSIST THEM TO RESIST SOVIET PRESSURES WITHOUT BRINGING DANGER OF INSTABILITY. IN THIS VIEW, FOR EXAMPLE, IF ALL EE COUNTRIES HAVE BUILT FAIRLY

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PAGE 01 PRAGUE 00474 03 OF 03 241937Z

43

ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 INR-05 CIAE-00

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 3 OF 3 PRAGUE 0474

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NORMAL RELATIONS WITH THE US AND THE WEST, THEY  
WILL SEE IT AS IN THEIR OWN INTEREST TO AVOID  
DANGEROUS SOVIET PRESSURES ON YUGOSLAVIA. OUR  
PATIENCE IN DEALING WITH OFTEN UNPLEASANT REGIMES  
WOULD THUS PAY OFF BY BUILDING WIDELY SHARED  
RESISTANCE TO SOVIET INTERVENTION OR EXPLOITATION  
OF POSSIBLE INSTABILITIES.

7. SUCH AN APPROACH WOULD MAKE FOUR DEMANDS UPON  
US. FIRST, IN THE SHORT TERM, WE WOULD HAVE TO  
FOREGO INSISTENCE THAT EE REGIMES WE ARE DEALING  
WITH MUST UNIFORMLY SUPPORT US SHORT-TERM POLICY  
NEEDS. WE MUST BE AWARE THAT, TRAPPED BETWEEN  
TWO SUPER POWERS, THE EE COUNTRIES' IDENTITY OF  
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PAGE 02 PRAGUE 00474 03 OF 03 241937Z

INTERESTS WITH OURS WILL STAY LIMITED. OUR STAKE IN YUGOSLAVIA IS SO GREAT, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT WE WOULD HAVE TO PUT UP WITH SOME IRRITATION FROM YUGOSLAV ACTIONS UNHELPFUL TO US INTERESTS, BECAUSE SUPPORTING YUGOSLAV SELF-SUFFICIENCY IN THE FACE OF SOVIET PRESSURE IS OUR MAIN CONCERN. IN MANY AREAS, WE WOULD HAVE TO RECOGNIZE THAT EE INDEPENDENCE IS OFTEN NOT SYNONYMOUS WITH PRO-US STANDS.

SECOND, OUR GREATEST TASK WOULD BE TO UNIFY US POLICY, WHICH MEANS PERSUADING THE PUBLIC AND CONGRESS TO SUPPORT A LONG-TERM APPROACH TO EASTERN EUROPE. WE CANNOT EXCUSE OURSELVES BY SAYING CONGRESS WILL NOT COOPERATE, FOR EVENTUALLY THERE THERE IS NO EXCUSE FOR NOT PRODUCING A SUSTAINABLE NATIONAL POLICY. IF THE POLICY IS ONE OF RELATIVE RESTRAINT, THIS WILL BE ALL THE HARDER TO OBTAIN.

THIRD, WE MUST COOPERATE CLOSELY WITH OUR NATO AND OTHER ALLIES IN A UNIFIED APPROACH TO EASTERN EUROPE. WORKING WITH GERMANY IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT. THE WEIGHT OF THE EC IS ALSO HIGHLY IMPORTANT, AND WORKING SUCCESSFULLY WITH IT MAY BE ABOUT AS HARD AS DOING SO WITH CONGRESS.

FOURTH, FOR ALL THAT WAS SAID ABOVE ABOUT AN EE POLICY DISTINCT FROM SOVIET POLICY, THE REALIST RECOGNIZES THE PRIMACY OF US-USSR RELATIONS. SUCCESS FOR US OBJECTIVES IN EASTERN EUROPE DEPENDS UPON A TOLERABLE US-USSR RELATIONSHIP, AND IN PARTICULAR UPON A LETTING-UP OF SOVIET PRESSURES IN EASTERN EUROPE IN RECOGNITION OF ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL REALITIES. IN THIS VIEW, HOWEVER, THE US AIM IS NOT SO MUCH TO OBTAIN AN ORGANIC EE-USSR RELATIONSHIP AS TO OBTAIN SOVIET ACQUIESCENCE IN A NORMAL EE-WESTERN RELATIONSHIP. WE WILL NOT RECOGNIZE THAT A PRAGUE SPRING THREATENS SOVIET SECURITY, OR THAT YUGOSLAVIA OUGHT TO BE CLOSER TO THE USSR: WE STAND FOR THE REAL INDEPENDENCE OF ALL EE COUNTRIES, AND CONSIDER THIS COMPATIBLE WITH SOVIET SECURITY. AS THE  
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PAGE 03 PRAGUE 00474 03 OF 03 241937Z

COUNSELOR POINTED OUT IN HIS LONDON REMARKS, THIS IS THE REAL CHALLENGE IN OUR EE POLICY.  
PERRY



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